

GREAT BARRINGTON
LIBRARIES
Strategic Plan 2024-2029



Table of Contents

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	3
WELCOME LETTER.....	4
LIBRARY OVERVIEW.....	6
MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS.....	11
OUR VALUES.....	12
COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS.....	13
METHODOLOGY.....	16
USER NEEDS ASSESSMENTS.....	18
THE FINALE: THE FINAL PRIORITIES.....	21
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, ACTIONS AND TIMELINE.....	22
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	32
APPENDICES.....	34
SURVEY CHARTS	
OLLI FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES	
COMMENTS FROM SURVEYS	
LIBRARY SURVEY ENGLISH VERSION	
LIBRARY SURVEY SPANISH VERSION	

Quotes in italics are from library survey respondents.

Governing Board Approval

This Strategic Plan for 2024-2029 for Great Barrington Libraries was approved by Board of Library Trustees on September 29, 2023.



Land Acknowledgement of the Great Barrington Libraries

Related to our mission of supporting and fostering learning through the dissemination of knowledge, the Great Barrington Libraries acknowledge that the lands on which our buildings stand are the traditional lands of the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of the Mohican People. We acknowledge the painful history of dispossession and forced removal from this territory, and we honor and respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land on which we gather. We honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. We commit to continuing to learn how to become better caretakers of the land we inhabit, to understand the history and traditions of those who cared for it before us, and to learn from the successes and failures of preceding generations.

Adopted by the Library Trustees on January 18, 2022

October 1, 2023

Welcome All,

Our shared history as residents of Great Barrington runs deep and dates back to 1761 when, due to its location on a vital thoroughfare connecting Fort Orange in Albany, New York with Springfield, Massachusetts, the Town was officially incorporated. At that time, our predecessors' eyes were trained on the future and sought to create a community in which imagination and connection would be the bedrock. Looking back, it is evident they were successful.

We prospered at the dawn of the 19th century as widespread manufacturing industries brought the Housatonic Railroad to town in 1842 and facilitated construction of the Mahaiwe Theatre in 1904. Denizens of Berkshire County turned out in droves to celebrate our 250th anniversary with pomp, circumstance and one heck of a parade in July of 2011. Another momentous milestone came in 2020 when, after voters said yes to efforts proposed 15 years prior, the Berkshire Hills Regional School District's middle school was renamed in honor of Great Barrington Native Son, W.E.B. Du Bois.

More recent chapters of our collective story have brought challenges that have tested our mettle and brought our community closer as a result.

The library world changed overnight, too. Heavy, immovable furniture made social distancing difficult in the early days, and an immediate shift to technology as the dominant means of both connecting and communicating with one another created undue stress for staff members who, in the midst of balancing their own personal struggles, worked tirelessly to serve the public without interruption despite a diminution of services across the board.

In Great Barrington, the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system at the Mason Library began experiencing systemic failure; as of this writing, it remains only partially operational. In Housatonic, the architectural gem that is the Ramsdell Library has no ventilation system to speak of save for open windows which, while appropriate during the 1918 pandemic, is unacceptable by 21st-century health standards.

Despite these ongoing challenges, we are faced with an opportunity to focus on the road ahead and envision a future that is bright; as such, it is with a renewed sense of optimism that we move forward.

At our 2023 Annual Town Election, residents of Great Barrington cast ballots to elect a pair of new library trustees, both of whom bring new energy to their three-year term. More good news followed in June when Donna Brown was named Interim Director of the Great Barrington Libraries, bringing with her a wealth of institutional knowledge (gleaned in her previous role as Assistant Director of Operations) and dedication to guide us through a period of ongoing transition.

In an epic feat of collaboration, made possible by guidance from Donna Brown and input from the community at large, we have crafted a flexible planning document for the future;

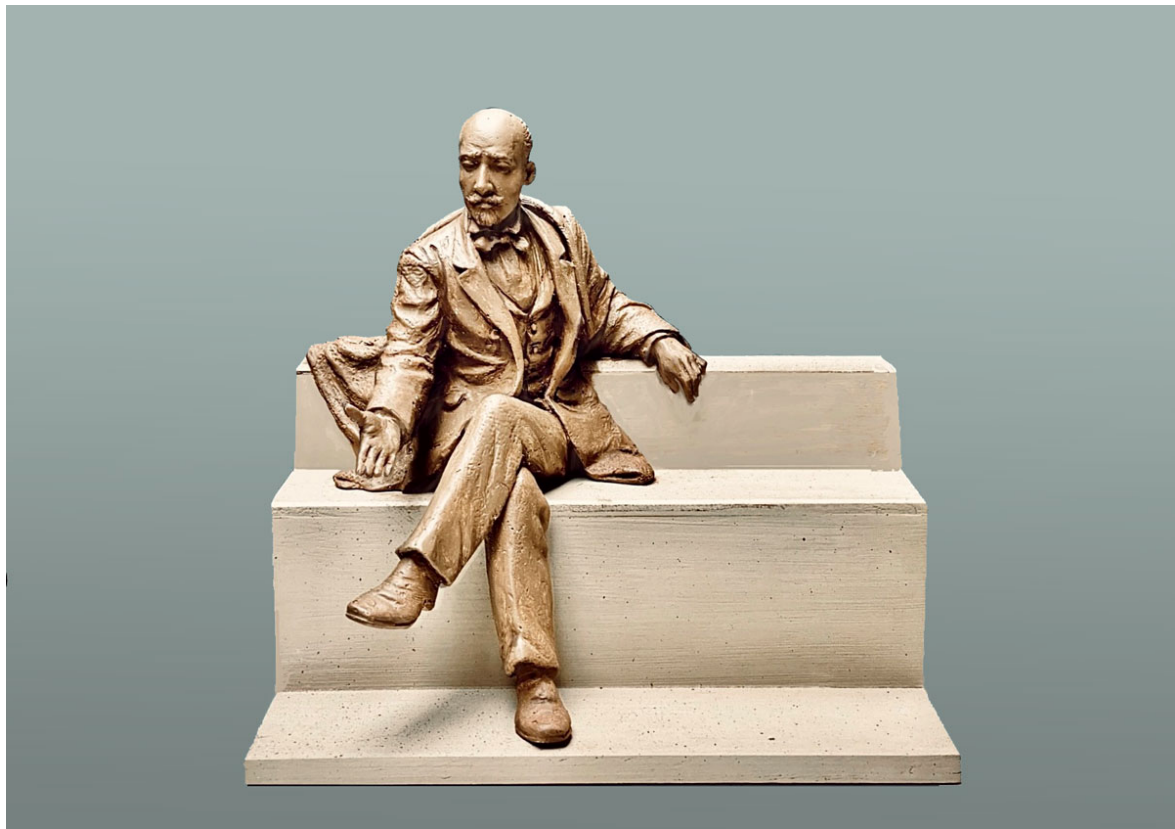
without further ado, we present the latest iteration of the Great Barrington Libraries' 2024-2029 Strategic Plan: "Reflect, Re-Imagine and Re-Connect".

As always, we welcome your feedback and support.

In the meantime, what are you waiting for? Our doors are open, and we welcome your visit to the Mason Library (231 Main Street) in downtown Great Barrington and at the Ramsdell Library (1087 Main Street) in the village of Housatonic.

With thanks and appreciation,

The Trustees, Friends, and Staff of the Great Barrington Libraries



Great Barrington Memorial to W.E.B. DuBois

The proposed statue in front of Mason Library, Fall 2024
webduboissculpture.org

LIBRARY OVERVIEW

The Town of Great Barrington's geographical layout is unique in boasting two epicenters of daily life in a pair of disparate locales, the historic Village of Housatonic and the thriving downtown, each with its own public library. In keeping with the current societal trend, both destinations contain far more than books (from museum passes to mobile hotspots and more). Each is uniquely poised to function as a living room of sorts for their respective communities, providing warm, safe, accessible spaces for intergenerational mingling, which suggests a welcome return to the genesis of each library.

Ramsdell Library

Located in the northeastern most corner of town, Ramsdell Library was given to the town in the will of Theodore H. Ramsdell, owner of Monument Mills, who directed his heirs to erect and equip a public library to benefit village residents. It was his son, T. Ellis Ramsdell, who entered into an agreement with Boston architects McLean & Wright, who ultimately designed this architectural gem, built in the Beaux-Arts style, which opened to the public in 1908 on the site of the first house built in Housatonic a century prior. The building's second floor, known widely as "The Great Hall", served as a thriving community space hosting concerts, dances and theater performances; an expansion, at the dawn of The Great Depression, was carried out by the Pittsfield firm of Harding & Seaver. In 2014, Ramsdell Library was placed on the National Register of Historic Places; despite scant transitional hours at the time of this writing, it remains the only public building in Housatonic poised to dramatically invigorate the surrounding area. In recent years, there has been a widespread call for the restoration of this vital space accessible to all in the Great Barrington community at large, including the next generation.

Mason Library

Designed by Blanchard & Barnes of New York City, Mason Library was dedicated July 24, 1913 during a fertile time for local library growth. The second of two public libraries to open within five years was made possible after town resident Mary A. Mason, widow of Captain Henry Hobart Mason, who summered in Great Barrington and is buried there, left a \$50,000 bequest to the Town upon her death in 1910 for the purpose of building and furnishing a new library, to replace one in a clapboard house previously on the site. Mason Library was rededicated in 2007, following extensive renovations that not only doubled its size but also made it handicapped accessible, made possible by a construction grant from the Massachusetts Libraries Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The library's archives, permanently on display, honor civil rights activist and scholar W.E.B. Du Bois and inventor William Stanley both of whom have deep roots in Great Barrington and ultimately changed the world with their brilliance.

Today, the two Great Barrington Libraries work together to facilitate residents' access to a large collection of books and movies; high-speed internet and hotspots; as well as a robust array of services including inter-library loan and children's programming. In 2020, Ramsdell Library ventured beyond books when its "Library of Things" was unveiled, putting everything from virtual reality headsets and podcasting kits to power tools and maker kits into the hands of library patrons, free of charge.

ABOUT THE LIBRARY

As of 2023, the Town of Great Barrington has the largest land mass (46 square miles) and population (7,172 as of the 2020 census) in Southern Berkshire County. Over the past three years, the Town has experienced a multitude of difficulties, many of which were directly related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which have caused interruptions in both hours and services; in addition, there have been significant changes in leadership and staff during this time to the tune of seven total permanent and part-time staff members lost.

Despite this turbulence, the Great Barrington Libraries Board of Trustees has embraced the present crossroads as an opportunity to, “Reflect, Re-Imagine and Re-Connect” with our community and our priorities, as evidenced by our 2024-2029 Strategic Plan.

At this time, we are also preparing to participate in the new cycle of competitive grants from Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program in order to make much-needed improvements to the Ramsdell Library. This trajectory is propelled by two pieces of significant groundwork: a Facilities Vision Program (2018) and Archaeological Study (2021).

In order to pave the way in returning Ramsdell Library to its roots as a space for future generations, we have requested funding through the Community Preservation Act Special Round Grant of 2023 (for FY 2024) to update our Building Program as well as Conditions Assessment for the historic building. As of this writing, our community has been without the Ramsdell Library for more than two months while the building undergoes renovation for ramp construction to partially satisfy the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance as well as installation of a new boiler.

GOVERNANCE

The Great Barrington Public Libraries are governed by a Board of Trustees, consisting of six elected members serving terms of one to three years in length, tasked with determining plans, policies, and priorities for the libraries. The Library Director remains responsible for the day-to-day management of the libraries, making monthly reports to the Board of Trustees and an annual report for inclusion in the Town Report; carrying out plans, policies, and priorities as established by the Board of Trustees; and reporting to the Town Manager.

***“If the town library is stagnant, it’s reflective of how people will view the town’s future.
Vibrant library = town with a vibrant future.”***
(Survey respondent)

HOURS

The Great Barrington Public Libraries are open a total of 50 hours each week and staffed by a total of six individuals (as opposed to 13 previously). The Ramsdell Library hours remain limited due to the aforementioned construction and staffing shortages.

MASON LIBRARY		RAMSDELL LIBRARY
CLOSED	SUNDAY	1PM-4PM
CLOSED	MONDAY	1PM-6PM
10AM-6PM	TUESDAY	CLOSED
10AM-6PM	WEDNESDAY	CLOSED
10AM-6PM	THURSDAY	CLOSED
10AM-6PM	FRIDAY	CLOSED
10AM-3PM	SATURDAY	CLOSED



Movies at Mason Library

COLLECTIONS & SERVICES

Based on the FY24 Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) for Mason Library

	2021	2023
Total Holdings (including downloadable audio or eBooks available through C/WMARS)	264,992	297,078
Population/Holdings per capita(1)	6996/38	7214/41
Annual Circulation/circulation per capita	148,210/21	120,612/16.7
Items Loaned to other Libraries	18,717	12,798
Items Provided by other Libraries	20,652	17,126
Total Visitors (4)	121,622	59,217
Total Number of Registered Borrowers(3)	5872	7240
Total Number of Adult Programs/attendees	141/1151	4/47
Total Number of Children's Programs/attendees	273/3844	234/3626
Quiet Room/Meeting Room Usage (Times)	1663/286	432
Computer Usage (Times)	16,687	4472
Nonresident Circulation Transactions(2)	N/A	24,222

1) As noted, the holdings per capita has gone up but the circulation per capita has gone down. This number is also somewhat inaccurate since the counter for our door to the Mason had not been functional for several weeks. Also of note is the decrease in adult programming this past year. This is partly due to insufficient ventilation in either libraries outside of the Children's area that is still waiting for remediation as well as a change in library management.

2) Of interest is non resident circulation transactions indicate 8% of use of the library are from other towns.

3) Number of registered borrowers that were residents of our municipality is 5012 out of total of 7240 registered borrowers indicate many use the library outside of our municipality or 31% are people that do not live in our town but use our library.

4) Total visits are estimates.

**Of note is our extensive Children's Programming during this period that is worth mentioning; total programming including YA, 6-11, birth to five was 234 programs and 3676 children attended these programs due to the efforts of our children's librarian.

Based on the FY24 Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) for Ramsdell Library

Meeting Rooms/Programs held		0
Total Circulation		11,398
Total Holdings		19,120
Total Attendance		4297



Adam Gudeon, artist

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

Mission Statement:

The Great Barrington Libraries provide access to information and materials for the purpose of life-long learning, enhancing diversity, building community, and supporting the enjoyment of reading for pleasure.

Vision Statement:

Libraries shall function as vibrant, safe, welcoming “third places”* for all people to gather, meet, and learn. By Reflecting and Re-Connecting with our past, we will be able to create an inspired and Re-Imagined future that is more reflective of our modern needs.

*social surroundings that are separate from home and work



Sunday afternoon at Ramsdell

OUR VALUES

Welcoming: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging (EDIB); serving people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities; everyone has a seat at the community table.

Community Focus: Recognizing and promoting what is unique about the Great Barrington communities and developing programming for all of our community members.

An Open Mind: Maintaining balance in collections, programs, and ideas that respect different viewpoints. Be respectful, open minded, and accepting.

Evidence-based: Utilizing data and research, and making library decisions that align with our resources, needs, and support systems.

Flexible and Forward Thinking: Being able to quickly adjust and be open to creative new ideas, changing times, and events using guidelines that will enable us to remain “library ready”.



Gabrielle K. Murphy @goldilocksoftheshire

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Since its incorporation in 1761, the town of Great Barrington has experienced myriad claims to fame. In 1869, civil rights activist and scholar W.E.B. Du Bois was born here, as evidenced by his eponymous Boyhood Homesite — a National Historic Landmark commemorating the Native Son's deep roots in Berkshire County. Not two decades later, inventor William Stanley used his practical transformer to literally put Great Barrington on the map when he illuminated Main Street in 1886 and, in doing so, sparked the phenomenon that is alternating current electricity.



A river runs through it, one called the Housatonic — whose moniker derives from the Algonkian word Housatunnock, and pays homage both to “a place beyond the mountain” and a group of native Mohicans, on whose ancestral lands Great Barrington was built. The town spans a sprawling 46 square miles and is bound by seven neighboring communities.

Due north of downtown proper, the Village of Housatonic is bustling with its own history — namely as a community of creatives, once populated by immigrant mill workers largely from Italy and Poland, with a water tower standing sentinel over daily life across the hamlet's single square mile. The Housatonic Curtain Company, an offshoot of Country Curtains (founded in 1956 by Jane Fitzpatrick and her husband from their dining room table) operated from 1976-2017 as did this historic Rising Paper Mill — which, at its heyday in 1873, was the largest paper factory in the world.

In many ways, visiting Great Barrington's little sibling is akin to stepping back in time: the former elementary school, albeit vacant for two decades, has been recently slated for affordable housing; at the corner of Pleasant and Main Streets stands a restaurant of the same name where, from 1993-2009, former state senator Jack Fitzpatrick ran his iconic Jack's Grill where part of the allure was the model train chugging along its track above diners' heads as they ate.

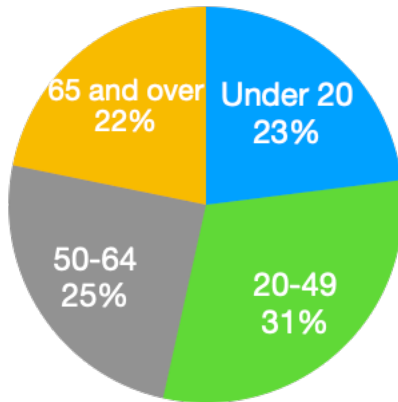
Housatonic experienced a literal, “Back to the Future” moment in early 1990 when visual effects artist and local resident Doug Trumbull took up residence in a vacant mill to design a simulator ride destined for Universal Studios (where it debuted in May 1991) employing hundreds of local residents in the process. Today, it remains a ‘simmering’ village rife with great potential.

Of further note, Great Barrington is the home of Bard College at Simon's Rock, the nation's first early college, and the five-star rated Critical Access Fairview Hospital which serves all of Southern Berkshire County as well as communities in Connecticut and New York.

In closing, Great Barrington might best be described as a study of contrasts. In 2012, the storied Smithsonian Magazine touted Great Barrington tops in a roundup of their Best Small Towns in America; just two years later, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts placed a designation on Housatonic, deeming it a “blighted community.” The two dichotomous locales, each with its own distinctive personality, are ultimately bound together by joint tax bills payable to the Town of Great Barrington — which, for those lucky enough to reside here, would likely agree is indeed pretty great.

Community Quick Facts

The most recent statistics published by the American Community Survey(ACS) in May 2023, the population of Great Barrington is 7214, with a change of +0.6% from 2020 of 42 people.



Age Distribution

(under 5 - 5.1%)

(over 80 - 6%)

**Of note on age distributions, comparing 1980 to 2020, the population under 18 has dropped from 1825 to 1296 persons.

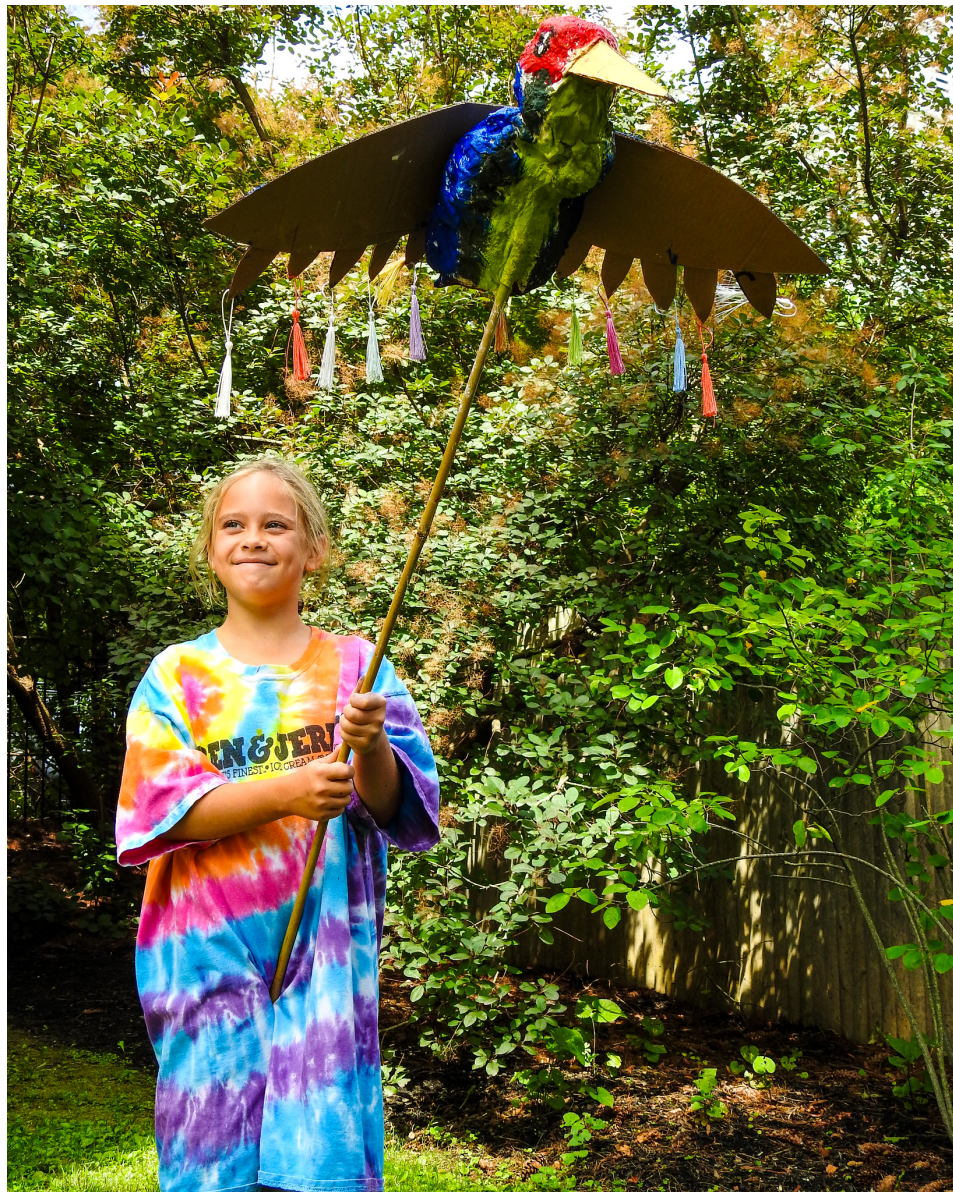
Racial Distribution**	
African American	2%
Asian	2.6%
Hispanic	3.5%
White	88.6%

**Those who speak a language other than English at home 7.9%, with 1.5% speaking English less than fluent.

- Sanctuary City designation was approved by Town Meeting in 2017. Future population growth for Great Barrington is difficult to predict. Projections show slowed growth for the State on average. Weighing in the balance is our status as a Sanctuary City and the Covid migration of remote workers to Great Barrington. Collection of official data lags behind for these current trends. According to Susan Strate of the Donahue Institute, Berkshire County has "the profile of an increasingly seasonal location."

Estimates by the Census Bureau only include residents who declare they live here the majority of the time. Like the Cape and Islands, Berkshire County is specifically defined as a "recreation" county according to the USDA.

- Total housing units show a 82.1% occupancy rate with 24.8% renter occupied. The housing stock in comparison has risen in the past 10 years by 6.3% (Massachusetts rate is 6.8%). Town of Great Barrington Housing Needs Assessment 2020 shows a gradual depletion of middle income brackets with nearly half of all households earning less than 80% of area median income. Our housing units however have steadily gone up through the efforts of many assistance programs including Great Barrington Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Berkshire Taconic Foundation, and Construct Inc. There is active planning for affordable housing throughout Great Barrington and Housatonic.
- Economically, median income is \$35,320 with less than 100% poverty level at 3.1% and 100-149% at 5.7%. Employment figures indicate 42% work in business, science or art, 25.6% are in education, healthcare, Social Assistance.
- Transportation data shows 4.5% of households do not have a vehicle.



Gabrielle K. Murphy @goldilocksoftheshire

METHODOLOGY

Widespread challenges in 2020, coupled with turnover in library leadership (in August 2022 and again in May 2023), caused the Great Barrington Libraries' Strategic Plan to lapse at the close of 2021. In accordance with the Town Charter, the Board of Trustees "shall be responsible for a long-range plan every five years, with annual updates."

A shift in perspective ultimately sparked an invaluable realization: the challenges being faced were an opportunity for evolution at the Great Barrington Libraries, as evidenced by our foundational theme: "Reflect, Re-Imagine and Re-Connect".

In the spring of 2023, the Interim Director and the Trustees committed to moving forward on the Strategic Planning process using introductory guidance from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, along with planning resources furnished by the Massachusetts Library Systems. A subcommittee, created by the Interim Director and Trustees, proceeded to take a deep dive into the process using analysis of past Great Barrington Libraries' Strategic Plans as a starting point.

In July, we commenced with seeking input from the community at large via surveys, on paper and online, available in English and Spanish, which were distributed throughout Town throughout the summer.

Heeding the advice of *Get Creative*, we aligned with the concept of *Intercept Surveys*, a research method used to gather feedback from a target audience, to pose timely and relevant questions about residents' use of the Great Barrington Libraries.

The results were surprising.

Ongoing outreach at the Town's weekly Farmers Market allowed us to connect with frequent library users; gather feedback from members of the community who do not identify as regular library patrons; and gain a unique perspective from second-home owners who provided comparative analysis with their hometown libraries.

The public's enthusiasm for our survey and appreciation for the opportunity to provide nuanced verbal responses, is likely evidence of an increased and collective desire, in today's post-pandemic landscape, to forge live, human connections.

In August 2023, Rob Cullin and Janet Nelson from *ReThinking Libraries*, a consulting firm tasked with helping libraries engage their communities, envision their future and continually evolve, facilitated training sessions for the staff and trustees. The Trustees participated in a strategic planning tool, Strength, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR) Analysis aimed at using data about an organization's current position coupled with individuals' ideas and dreams about its future, in order to build an energizing vision toward which to strive.

Our "Takin' It To The Street" approach, designed to literally meet community members where they are, continued with one-on-one conversations and targeted focus groups throughout August/September 2023. This series of community conversations included the following groups of individuals:

- Educators
- Frequent library patrons
- Friends of the Great Barrington Libraries
- Librarians throughout the Tri-State area
- Non-Library Users
- Young families

And local nonprofit organizations:

- The Center for Peace Through Culture
- Extra Special Teas Disability Partners
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute(OLLI)
- Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires
- Railroad Street Youth Project
- Claire Teague Senior Center
- Volunteers in Medicine Berkshires

With guidance from our team of consultants at ReThinking Libraries, we then distilled our data down to the fundamental concepts of goals and actions which provided an achievable path forward.



USER NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

As loneliness and isolation persist across America in today's world landscape, the need for belonging (outside of an individual's home and place of work) is greater than ever. In turn, folks across the country are increasingly relying upon third places (defined as physical spaces designed for gathering, connecting, and sharing resources) to build community. The social support found in third places such as public libraries has been shown to have a positive effect on long-term health and well-being. In 2023, the United States Surgeon General deemed loneliness an epidemic giving rise to urgency, within our local institutions, to address isolation and build community. In a small town like Great Barrington, the Mason and Ramsdell Libraries are poised to function as community living rooms: warm, safe, accessible spaces for intergenerational mingling.

A study by the Tufts Health Plan Foundation (which is part of the Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative) revealed several statistics relevant to our local population:

- More than 35% of those residents aged 65 and older in Great Barrington live alone (a figure that's higher than both the national and state averages)
- For individuals aged 65 and older, there is a direct correlation with depression
- An estimated 32% of residents aged 65 and older in Great Barrington suffer from depression

Our own survey revealed that our local libraries are a “lifeline,” a “safe space,” and “an asset,” but are in need of updating:

- *“Love the libraries, they provide a warm and friendly atmosphere.”*
- *“I am grateful for the library services already offered.”*
- *“Children’s section is great!”*
- *“I can get into your chairs [at the library], but I can't get out of them. You need age-friendly chairs.”*
- *“Please modernize Ramsdell now!”*

For Housatonic residents, the Claire Teague Senior Center on South Main Street in Great Barrington is nearly 14 miles round-trip which in the absence of reliable public transportation, makes this resource inaccessible to many. The Ramsdell Library is considered community accessible because it is centrally located and within walking distance for most residents.

Our survey revealed that improved communication is needed to ensure residents are aware of all we have to offer.

- *“What is a Library of Things?”*
- *“I don’t know where to access programs in order to find out what is available.”*
- *“Hours are confusing.”*
- *“The reason I don’t go to the library is because I think of it as only a place that offers quiet and books.”*
- *“I don’t know the names of the staff, but they’re nice.”*

We strive to meet the needs of a diverse community (including a growing Latino population)

through communication vehicles such as signage in multiple languages, a translation app, and expanded web site. Still, it is clear from the survey responses that more communication is needed, especially around awareness of our programs and offerings. All of this constructive feedback serves as the bedrock for communication with community members which will ultimately allow us to forge a way forward.

A young person shared, “Aside from the Railroad Street Youth Project, the library is the only other truly safe environment in town.” Considering the challenges facing young people today, this statement alone is testament to the power of third spaces to cultivate safety and connection, belonging and well being.

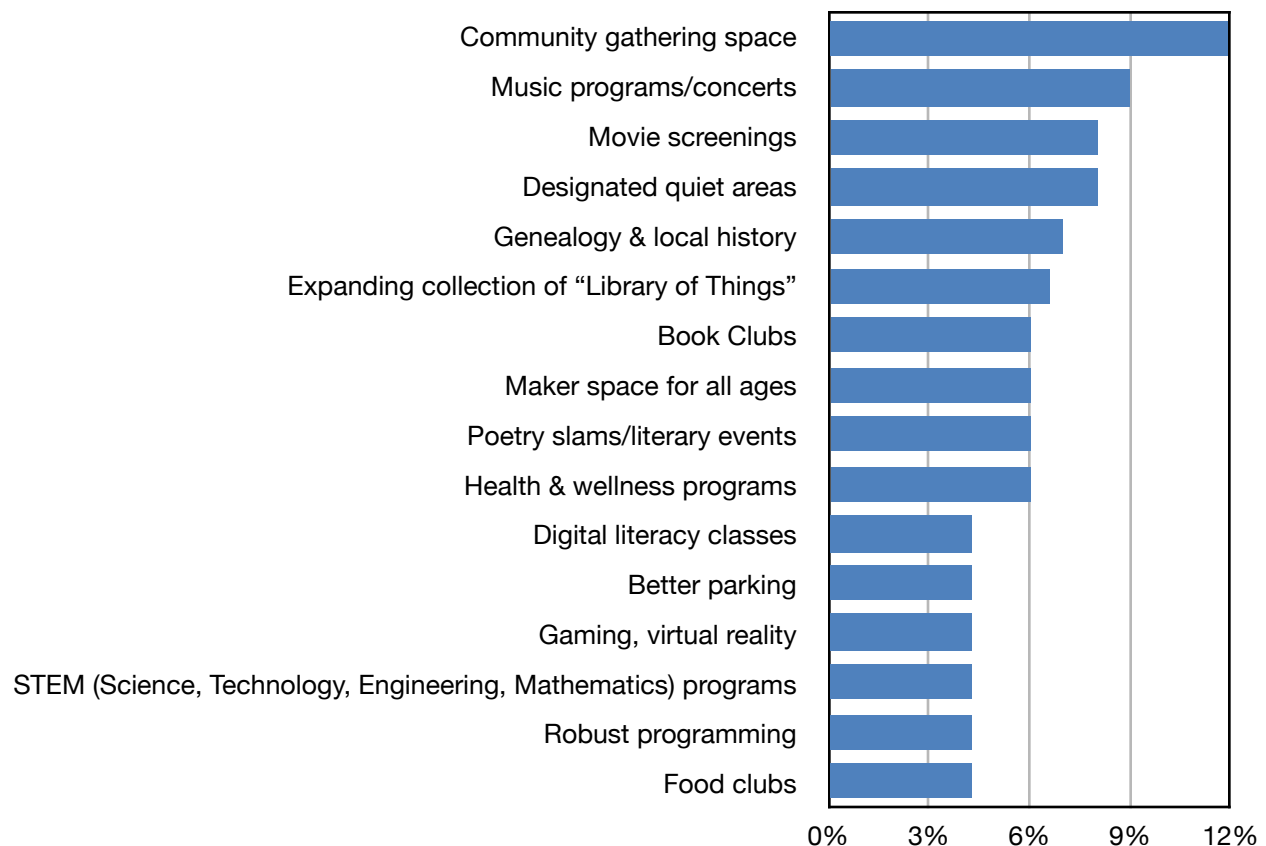
One survey respondent hit the proverbial nail on the head: “The library is an asset to the town of Great Barrington. When the [pandemic] hit our community, the library was a lifeline. It occupied our minds and brought pleasure in a difficult time.”

Community Survey Responses

Question 3: If you use the library, what is the reason for your typical visit?



Question 4: Which services would you like to see the library create or enhance?



Themes/Priorities

Evaluating the information we gathered in the planning process, the surveys, the community focus groups and informal conversations, several themes emerged.

Our libraries are more than books.

Not only do our community members use the library for books, children's materials, magazines, and DVDs, but a majority of our respondents desire a vibrant community gathering space.

Creating or enhancing Library Programming is essential to our community's needs and interests.

Our libraries need to be welcoming and comfortable spaces for all of our users. There is a great need for music programs, movie screenings, STEAM classes, digital literacy classes, and health and wellness programs.

Connecting and Communicating with our Library Community

Our community residents continue to express the need to be informed of what events are taking place in the library. The primary source of library news and events are through email, library website, and social media. Many have stated that they would like to see an improved monthly calendar and a seasonal calendar.

THE FINALE: THE FINAL PRIORITIES



Eclipse at Mason Library

When given the opportunity, our community members stated these are the initiative/services on which the library should focus during the next five years. Our strategic plan will emphasize and be responsive to these priorities.

- **Re-imagining our libraries as welcoming, healthy and sustainable buildings**
- **Increasing community gathering spaces**
- **Developing robust programs for all ages and interests supported by increased communication and outreach within the community**
- **Providing cutting edge technology and support for our communities.**
- **Creating spaces that emphasize creativity and innovation.**
- **Increasing quiet and work spaces.**

According to ALA (American Library Association), Design Thinking is an approach to problem solving by engaging with users early in the design process of projects. It helps people become creative problem solvers, the process encourages users to build empathy, ideate and prototype solutions, and refine those solutions by seeking additional feedback. Using this framework specific to libraries, it can be transformative in bringing power to all stakeholders. This is especially important in our small community.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, ACTIONS AND TIMELINE

Goals 2024-2029

Goal #1: Prosperous, sustainable, future-forward library system

Goal #2: Reinvigorate, reimagine, and renovate our library facilities as safe, ADA accessible, gathering spaces for the library staff and the entire community with 30 year horizon.

Goal #3: Expand outreach, partnerships, and collaborations with a focus on the underserved.

Goal # 4: Elevate programming that fosters life skills (life-long learning), economic success, creative culture, understanding our accelerated digital world and the health of our communities.

Goal# 5: Support ongoing library staff training and professional development, and advocate for staffing needs by ongoing cooperation with town leadership.

Goal# 6: Increase usage of the libraries through interesting programs and materials that support community interests.

Goal# 7: Offer a rewarding experience for our Volunteer Program.



Goal #1: Prosperous, sustainable, future-forward library system

Outcome:

- By 2029, we will have sustainable financial support without placing burden on taxpayers.
- We will have fully developed method of contact with all of our community with updated database.
- The newly developed foundation that supports our library system will be substantial for long range sustainability.
- We will be the center of technology needs for our community, striving for digital equity.

Objective	Actions	Timeline	By Whom
Communication	Website update with translation tools and accessibility applications.	April 2024	Library Leadership and Trustees
	Connect with community, old and new through strategic digital and hardcopy marketing.	FY24	Library Leadership
	Library Trustee Town Charter should be reviewed.	Library Trustee Charter review before January 2024.	Trustees
	“Ask Librarian” services	FY25 1st quarter	Library
Funding	Set up Foundation independent of municipality.	Fall 2023	Trustees/ Friends/ Volunteers.
	Sign Letter of Intent for technology grant LSTA.	December FY24	Library Leadership and Trustees
	MBLC Action Plan 12/1/23.	12/1/23	Library Leadership and Trustees

Objective	Actions	Timeline	By Whom
	Outreach to Selectboard and Finance Committee Nov. '23	Nov 2023	Trustees
	Apply for CPA FY25 funding	October 2023	Trustees
	Contract with fundraising consultants.	Fall 2023	Trustees
	Focus on municipal funding through line item requests	FY25	Trustees
	Set up infrastructure through Nonprofit Center of The Berkshires.	Fall 2023	Trustees/ Friends/ Volunteers.
Outreach	Community/Surveys & Discussions for Ramsdell Renovations.	Teen and Senior discussions FY24 Community Survey/Discussion for Ramsdell start in February and end May '24.	Trustees with subcommittee (to be formed)
	Friends support discussions.	December FY24	Friends
Technology	Teen Tech Discussion (LSTA) Senior Tech Discussion user needs assessment	LSTA draft preparation start end of Jan, 2024	Trustees with support from library staff.
	Replacement Schedule for hardware and updating software through Municipality Schedule review.	Discussion for municipality replacement schedule 10/23. Our agenda needs to be discussed as line item agenda.	Trustees with support from library staff.

***Fiscal Year 2024 is from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Goal #2: Reinvigorate, reimagine, and renovate our library facilities as safe, ADA accessible, gathering spaces for the library staff and the entire community with 30 year horizon.

Outcome:

- By 2029, age friendly spaces with maximum flexibility of use.
- Ramsdell Library design and construction will be completed to withstand the test of time for 30 year horizon.
- Buildings will be resilience hubs to serve the community.

Objective	Actions	Timeline	By Whom
Complete ADA Accessibility for Ramsdell Library.	CPA FY25 funding application for \$150,000 as requirement for MPLCP Grant*.	Fall 2023	Trustees
	Arrange for Update Building Program and Condition Assessment Study.	Winter/ Spring 2023-24 for discussion.	Trustees
	Discussion with Town about further financial obligations for this project.	Winter/ Spring 2023-24 for discussion.	Trustees
Renovate and Reimagine the libraries as a sustainable library and community gathering space.	MPLCP application for round 2023/2024.	MPLCP- May 31, 2024 pending town approval. And funding for Resiliency Hub (both libraries) starting FY25	Trustees
	Set up libraries as resiliency hub with 24/7 virtual website as trusted source of information for crisis interventions as part of town initiative (Municipal Vulnerability Program)	Funding for Resiliency Hub (both libraries) starting FY25	Great Barrington Town Department s/ Libraries/ Trustees involvement.
Establish a Ramsdell Renovation AD Hoc Committee	Developing the entire process of gathering support for the building project.	Spring 2024 with multiple community discussions	Initiated by Trustees

Objective	Actions	Timeline	By Whom
Owner's Project Manager	As per MPLCP before signing for Grant if given	Fall 2024 at earliest.	Ramsdell Renovation Committee
Future-Forward design concept that integrates the historic building attributes with needs of future generations.	Careful selection of consultants with public input.	FY 26-27.	Ramsdell Renovation Committee
Age friendly, modular furniture to fulfill various health considerations	Design considerations with support from Library Consultants for both libraries.	FY26 onward.	Ramsdell Renovation Committee and Trustees

* Massachusetts Public Library Construction Project (MPLCP)

Goal #3: Expand outreach, partnerships, and collaborations with a focus on the underserved.

Outcomes

- By 2025, the underserved will have another welcoming place in the community.
- Newcomers will be able to have a friendly face and access to information.
- EDIB values are incorporated in our programming choices.

Objective	Action	Timeline	By Whom
Increase cultural events that involve people of various backgrounds.	Celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month annually.	September 2024	Trustees with library support
	Unveiling and celebration of the W.E.B. Du Bois Statue in front of the library.	Fall of 2024	Library and Du Bois Sculpture Project
	Signage that reflects our diverse community	ASAP	Library
	Subscribe to online interpreter services for all languages.	FY 25-26	Library

Objective	Action	Timeline	By Whom
	Celebrate Jazz Month annually in April.	April 2024	Trustees
Facilities for English Language Learning Programs	Engage with Literacy Volunteers of Berkshire County to have a space in South County that would be available on nights and weekends.	FY29	Volunteer Organization
Creative ways to increase our library facilities for citizens with varied needs.	Comprehensive discussion regarding expanding our Library hours to reflect our community needs.	FY 27-29 with consideration to budget and staffing.	Trustees
Programs that are inclusive of everyone.	Consider needs of our growing Spanish speaking population and develop focus groups for programming.	FY 24-25 and onward	Trustees and subcommittee
	Senior Needs with advisory programming support	FY 24-25 and onward	Trustees and subcommittee
	Special Needs persons with advisory group support	FY 24-25 and onward	Trustees and subcommittee
Delivery of materials for those who are homebound.	Continuation of this program for those in need. This would include both seniors, homebound and mothers with young children who cannot get to the library.	FY 24 onward	Volunteer pool through efforts of Library Staff.
Pilot program for children with sensory needs	Work in consultation with Pediatric specialist and stakeholders to develop this program.	Begin planning Summer of 2025	Volunteers/ Library Staff.
Provide library information through print material, and library tours	Produce pamphlets for newcomers and visitors; ie Chamber of Commerce welcome packets.	FY 26 or sooner	Library
	Develop self guided tours and maps	FY 26 or sooner	Library

Goal # 4: Elevate programming that fosters life skills (life-long learning), economic success, creative culture, understanding our accelerated digital world and the health of our communities.

Outcomes

- By 2029, programs would exceed those of 2019, which was 250 programs a year.
- Developed online programing in a robust manner, including our YouTube Channel. We will have over 50 programs by end of 2028.
- By 2025, we will have an ongoing active digital literacy program.
- By 2026, we will have developed a closer relationship with teens and emerging adults.

Objective	Action	Timeline	By Whom
Schedule robust live and virtual programming consistently by the month or season.	Plan for at least 2 adult programs per week. (Increase to our baseline goal of 2019 which was 20 programs per month.)	Nov. 2023 through Summer 2024. Increase programs thereafter.	Trustees/Friends initiative with library staff support if needed.
Schedule programs for Teens and emerging adults	Establish/develop committee	Fall of 2025 or sooner.	Trustees
	Plan for at least 2 programs per month after consultation with Railroad Street Youth Project (RSYP.)	Fall of 2025 or sooner.	Trustees/Teen and Emerging Adult Subcommittee/ Library Staff
Genealogy Programs	Set up volunteer committee to plan and establish ongoing programming	Spring of 2024	Trustees/committee initiative, with library staff support if needed.
Health and Wellness Programs	Establish volunteer committee to plan and produce ongoing programming	Fall of 2025 or sooner.	Trustees/Friends initiative with library staff support if needed.
Financial Literacy	Plan for at least two programs a month with SCORE Foundation and other financial mentors	Spring of 2027 or sooner	Trustees/Friends initiative with library staff support if needed.
Digital Literacy	Plan to coordinate with other libraries/outsource to start one program per month in each library.	Spring of 2025	Trustees/Friends initiative with library staff support if needed.

Goal# 5: Support ongoing library staff training and professional development, and advocate for staffing needs by ongoing cooperation with town leadership.

Outcomes

- In 2026, library staff will feel valued and supported with greater retention.
- Library staff will feel safer at their job.

Objective	Action	Timeline	By Whom
Staff retainment and higher level of job satisfaction.	Advocate for better compensation and constructive communication by going to town leadership and media.	Union contractual period is now through 6/30/26 and advocacy starts the year before around 10/1/2025.	Trustees and involved community members.
Staff will have access to training and professional development as well as resources they need to thrive as team members.	American Library Association and Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners have extensive training opportunities that would be interesting and helpful.	Great opportunity to guide all staff members, including the new hires who will need training, by Jan. 2024 or earlier.	Library Director with support from MBLC and MLS
	Encourage workshops to support staff enrichment.	Determined by Town and Library leadership FY24	Town Leadership
After hours support	Train volunteers to help keep the library open and accessible after hours.	FY 2029 or earlier	Library Director/Staff/Volunteers with town and union support
Occupational Assessment for prevention of work related injuries.	Request support from specialist in occupational health to provide assessment and support.	FY 27 Fall	Town HR

Goal# 6: Increase usage of the libraries through interesting programs and materials that support community interests.

Outcome

- By 2029, we will offer cutting edge technology training and tools.
- There will be opportunity to innovate and create within our 4 walls.
- We will have an online presence for those who cannot attend programs in person.

Objective	Action	Timeline	By Whom
Develop Maker Space for Creativity and Innovation	Develop a committee with library staff and stakeholders for this objective.	FY24 Spring and ongoing	All stakeholders including community members, Trustees and Staff

Objective	Action	Timeline	By Whom
	Plan for future spaces by incorporating into building renovations.	FY24	All stakeholders including community members, Trustees and Staff
Expand Library of Things	Develop a committee to identify wants and needs and make a wish list.	FY24 and ongoing	Committee volunteers and Staff members.
	Identify funding sources.	FY24 and ongoing	Committee volunteers and Staff members.
Entertainment programs in music, shows, movies and other programs	Research and develop a committee to brainstorm area resources to provide at least one program a week per library. Restore the film series and add music performances to make robust programming for all ages.	FY 24 onwards	Friends/ Volunteers and Staff
	Aim for at least one program a week.	FY 24 and ongoing	Friends/ Volunteers and Staff
	Restore the film series	FY 24 and ongoing	Friends
Provide cutting edge technological programming for teens and children.	Budget for funding	FY 27	Library
	Community conversations to identify technology needs.	FY 27	Library

Goal# 7: Offer a rewarding experience for our Volunteer Program.

Outcome

- By 2029, we will have a thriving volunteer program that will benefit the community as well as add another wonderful activity for people to participate and connect with.

Objective	Action	Timeline	By Whom
Develop a sustainable volunteer program	Start a dialogue with all stakeholders to develop a sustainable volunteer program.	FY 25 or sooner	Library Leadership /Trustees
	Solicit town legal advice for policy guidelines	FY 26 or sooner	Library Leadership /Trustees

Objective	Action	Timeline	By Whom
	Research successful library volunteer programs	FY25 or sooner	Library Leadership /Trustees
	Implement a volunteer program with additional community conversations	FY 27 or sooner	Library Leadership /Trustees
Offer high school internships to introduce library sciences and careers at Mason and Ramsdell Libraries	Reach out to vocational departments of local schools to develop interest in this program.	FY 27 or sooner	Library Leadership /Trustees

The goals noted above reflect the work of many individuals who love our libraries and wish to provide this endearing institution the best for future generations. Some of the goals are reconnecting with our previous Strategic Plan of 2017-2021. We renew our hope in Ramsdell and Mason to continue their roles as community institutions in serving all of us in the best possible way. We wish to **Reflect, Re-Imagine and Re-Connect**.

These goals are aspirational, subject to changes in Library leadership and flexible for opportunities or challenges that may occur. To measure our progress, we will monitor our actions quarterly until further notice. Trustees will remain fully engaged and committed to bringing these goals to fruition.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Great Barrington Libraries would like to thank the following individuals for their support and feedback during the strategic planning process:

The Library Staff who took the time to participate in the focus group and share their honest and helpful feedback about the Library, particularly behind the scenes.

All the community members who responded to the Great Barrington Libraries 2023 survey.

All the focus group and interview participants were engaged in the process, thoughtful in their responses, and generous with their time. Special thanks to ReThinking Libraries, Rob Cullin and Janet Nelson.

Library Trustees

Ruby Chang
Lauren Clark
Patrick Hollenbeck (Chair)
Carol McGlinchey
Sandra Pantorno
Rob Shaeffer

Friends of the Library

Ed Abrahams
Holly Hamer

Library Staff

Donna Brown, Interim Director
Christine Warner, Interim Assistant Director
Cheryl Attarian
Fran Hernandez
Marie Blauvelt
David Lamoreux

Members of the Community

Sharon Gregory
Michelle Loubert
Margaret McLallen
Joanne Cooney
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Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires, Liana Toscanini
Railroad Street Youth Project
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Sandy Pantorno

With support from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Massachusetts Library Association



Photo by Andreas Engel

Appendices

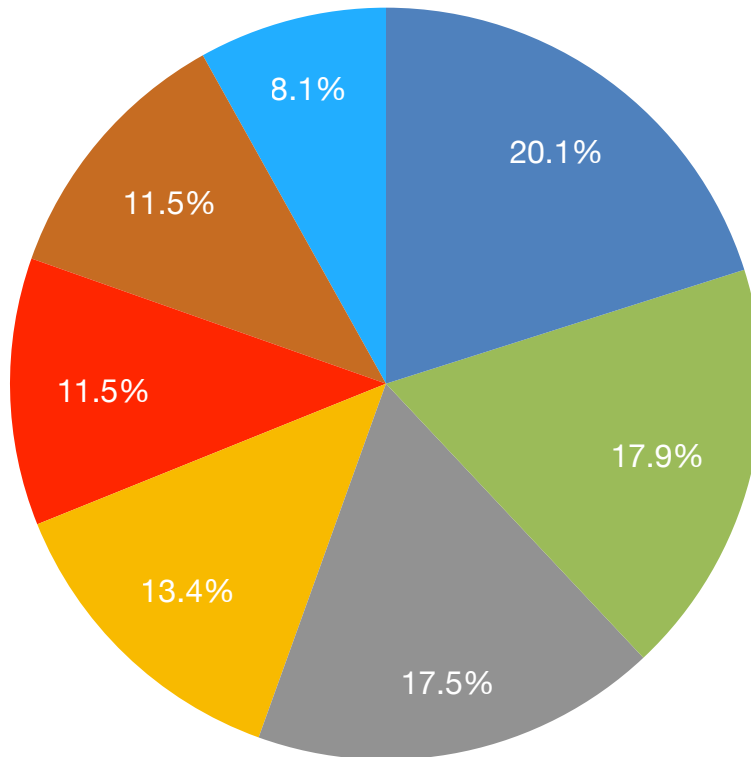


Library booth at "Party in the Park"
Photo by Andreas Engel

SURVEY CHARTS

Additional Community Survey Responses

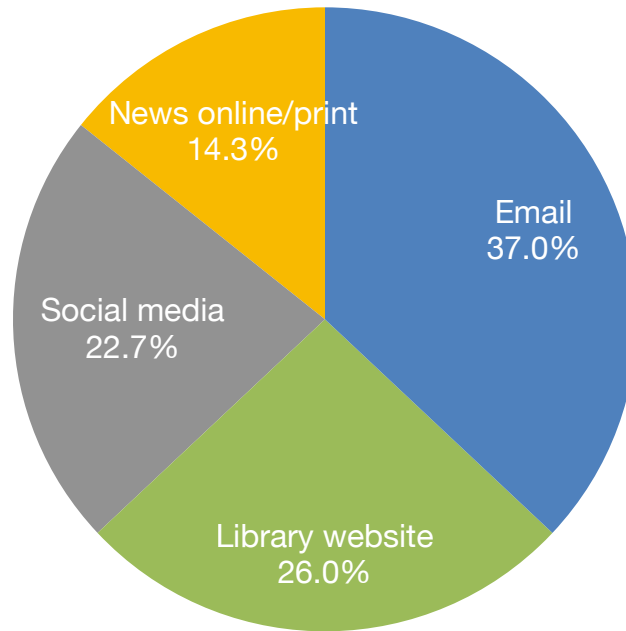
Question 9: Which initiatives/services do you think the libraries should focus on over the next 5 years?



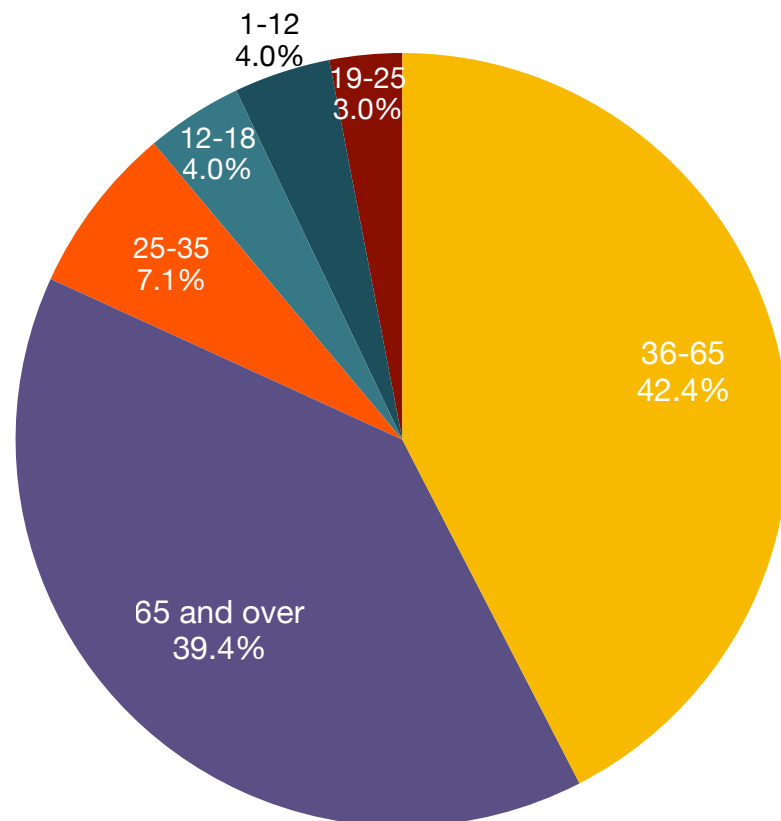
- 20.1% Creating robust programming for all ages
- 17.9% Increasing community gathering spaces
- 17.5% Collaborating with other community organizations and other libraries for programs
- 13.4% Creating maker spaces for all ages
- 11.5% Expanding digital literacy classes
- 11.5% Increasing quiet study/workspaces
- 8.1% Developing genealogy classes and increasing online resources

Question 8: Where do you prefer to find out about library news and events?

● Email ● Library website ● Social media ● News online/print



**Question 7:
What is
your age?**



OLLI FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

A Reimagined Future: What is your vision for both Mason and Ramsdell Libraries?

The library should be a major center of activities, especially for children, where they choose to go a lot.

Provide cultural events-speakers, music programs.
Place that feels comfortable and welcoming

Provide Community Services/Support for needy groups/community dinners/gathering events
Teach Access to digital media-expand users knowledge beyond the physical building.

Streamlined effective governance and funding

Buildings that work! Infrastructure, technology, HVAC, etc.

Frame thinking around our accelerating digital world.

Collaborate with other libraries in the area—yes.
Source of fun for children—learn the joy of books
Safe place for after school “loitering” and exploring.
Children have forgotten how to have fun and joy by experiencing the world on their own. This creates anxiety and dependence on the digital world more.

When Thinking of Developing a “Creative Culture,” What Comes to Mind?

Guest lectures
Exhibitions tied to GB history, etc.
Learning classes/events, ie: ceramics

Outreach

Cooperation with the school district

Offering meeting space to outside organizations

Lectures from well known authors, speakers, educators, music sponsored events, classes in topics for each age group, community pot lucks, films.

Books, (especially for kids)/programs that reflect the community’s values

Meeting spaces for education

Art exhibits-children’s work and anyone else’s

What Are Some Specific Goals Regarding Life Skills for All Ages?

Computer literacy

Reading skills

Providing programs specific to aging (some libraries even offer balancing exercise taught by a volunteer)

Opportunities to Interact with other age groups, especially children 🧒🧒🧒

Music Appreciation

Hobbies, eg, knitting

Tax and financial assistance

- Young: chores, asking questions, grooming, being helpful at home
 - Teens: chores, asking questions, volunteering, being helpful at home and learning how to fix things, being aware of health and safety matters.
 - Adults: social and political responsibilities; role models, volunteering
 - Seniors: mentors, giving back. Asking for help
-
- Kids: reading/writing/social skills/storytelling
 - Adolescents: listening, courses, crafts, getting into college, social skills
 - Adults: technology/digital education/social media
- Art/Music
Author's and education around top books/film

What Are Your Thoughts on Collaboration With Other Libraries or organizations? What Are the Benefits to Our Community?

Absolutely necessary. (Example: Lenox has music CD's that we can access in GB, other collections, services can have a specific location available to all)

We need to know more about the successful libraries in our region. How are they governed? What are the salary scales? How are they funded?(A comparative study should be done, a volunteer could do it)

Provide joint events-famous author series, social/community outreach/technology/education series/art/ concerts/theater trips/partner with town councils for key community projects

Yes, learn best practices (endorsed); event collaborations
Partnerships=accelerated success

Programming

Teen book club-run by teens, need to re-energize this group to the library!

Combining with other libraries for concerns, workshops, etc, book reads. Joint Children's events.

Technology

How to download eBooks
Computer help for tax forms, etc.

Links-push info on the library e-letter (list of Trustees), meetings
Digital literacy, digital access (computer)
Wi-Fi Access
Zoom Accounts

Tech hire/or staff

Accessibility

Accessibility means equal access regardless of personal challenges(physical and sensory such as hearing, vision sensory etc.) and to be supported in services for free education and research.

Quiet Hour for our autistic Community/headphones.

What Are Our Values As a Community?

Serving all people in community, equity in access—Yes (endorsed)

We need an ADA Knowledgeable consultant

Welcome immigrant community—ESOL Materials, bilingual books for parents of young children -Yes

Community input into library issues

Recognize and promote what is unique about GB

Respect, open minded, tolerant —Yes

Respect all people

Equal opportunity regardless of ability to pay—Yes

Creative thinking and generating new ideas

Provide Community Services to all ages—Yes (and meals)

COMMENTS FROM SURVEYS

Cultural dinners, Theater - Shakespeare acts, etc.; children acts

Experts giving wellness talks, community conversations - beginning with “welcome to my culture”, we are neighbors within neighborhoods, we are individual constellations of family/friends/common interests, marketing, needs colorful posters and cool website

What is library of things? Marketing?

If the town library is stagnant, it’s reflective of how people will view the town’s future.
Vibrant library = town with a vibrant future.

(I) miss the Boston Globe in Ramsdell. Please modernize Ramsdell now.
It’s ridiculous the town hasn’t made this a priority.

Author talks, other talks on topics of local interest, making space for community organizations, more ebooks.

Most of the reason I don’t go to the library is because I think of it as only a place that offers quiet and books. If it were a vibrant space for book launches, stimulating discussion, and professionally mediated difficult conversations, I would definitely use it more.

I use the interlibrary loan all the time. Would love to expand that to include more academic libraries/online databases and resources, or discounted access via the library to JSTOR, etc. Berkshires has many independent researchers in the community and this would be a huge value/ADD.

Need morning and evening open hours. Need more newspapers like it used to be before COVID.

GB virtual library seems like an afterthought, not updated materials online. YouTube channel for old videos.

Programs for life long learning financial planning, estate plans, investment.

Please renovate Ramsdell, I miss programs on the upper floor, user friendly hours (no mornings and no evenings presently).

Financial planning/investment programs. Activities at night in Ramsdell. Nothing to do down here in Housatonic. Please fix Ramsdell so we have a place to connect with the adult community. Handicap parking a must.

Laurie Harrison and her team in the children's room at Mason are a wonderful and vital part of our community. So grateful for how warm, welcoming, and wonderful she is.

Mason is not a very comfortable place to spend time in or do work in. It's very unwelcoming, improved the arrangement of tables/work areas. Some tables just have folding chairs, better seating.

Reading program year round.

Mason is an architectural jewel desperately in need of renovation (I don't know the Housatonic library so cannot comment). Recommend undertaking comprehensive facilities and service planning. FYI, library card question is confusing. Do you mean a card issued by a GB library or any library in Berkshire County? I assumed the former.

The Edge is best for getting library news.

Need morning hours for young families.

The hours of Ramsdell really don't fit the lifestyle of most people who live in Housatonic. High priority should be a Maker Space. We need the creativity and innovation.

I don't know the names of the staff, but they're nice.

The pandemic cages at the front desk are unappealing and uninviting. Can't these be made to be less so if they are truly needed?

Community gathering spaces should not come at the expense of the library's purpose as a quiet place to read, research and gathering info.

My kids love the summer book challenges, and preferred the reading challenges that weren't online. Something about a tangible book was always great. It makes it more real to them.

LIBRARY SURVEY ENGLISH VERSION

Great Barrington Libraries Survey, July 1-August 4, 2023 via paper copies, some online Google Form Surveys, Spanish surveys slightly changed to accommodate special interest. (See addendum)

1. How often do you usually visit the Mason/Ramsdell Library or the GB Virtual Library System?

Answer Choices	Response Number	Response Percentage
At least once a week	103	34%
At least once a month	88	29%
Two to three times per year	45	15%
I only visit during summer or holidays	19	6%
Never (Please complete question 2)	44	15%

2. If you do not use the library, please tell us why?

Answer Choices	Response Number	Response Percentage
I have trouble getting there.	11	10%
I don't know what is offered.	21	20%
I satisfy my needs for books, movies, magazines, news by other means.	40	40%
There aren't any programs	7	7%
Hours of operation do not fit my schedule.	22	22%

3. If you use the library, what is the reason for your typical visit? (Please check all that apply)

Answer Choices	Response Number	Response Percentage
Books	214	22%
Children's material	61	6.3%
Teen material	17	1.7%
Large print books	15	1.5%
Magazines	57	6%

DVDs	59	6%
Audiobooks	41	4.2%
Hotspots	24	2.5%
Library of Things	38	4%
Museum passes	69	7%
A quiet place to read/relax	91	9.4%
Attend adult/ children/teen	50	5%
Attend art or other exhibits	42	4.4%
Use Library computer for internet access	26	3%
Use library free Wi-Fi using your own device	43	4.4%
Use the copier or printer	37	4%
Tutoring/use a meeting room	28	3%
Garden club	7	0.6%
Creative Writing club	6	0.6%
Research	24	2.5%
Volunteering	10	1%

4. Both libraries seek to update its services to meet our patrons' needs and interests. Which of these services would you like to see the library create or enhance? (Please check all that apply.)

Answer Choices	Response Number	Respons Percentage
Community gathering space	157	12%
Designated quiet spaces	104	8%
Collaborative work and/or meeting space	79	6%
Genealogy and local history	92	7%
Expanding our collection of Library	86	6.6%
Maker space for all ages	84	6%
Music programs/concerts	117	9%

Movie screening	107	8%
Digital literacy classes	58	4.5%
Better parking	41	3%
Book clubs	85	6%
Gaming and virtual reality	37	3%
STEM (Science, Technology,	64	5%
Poetry slams/literary events	84	6%
Robust programming	59	4.5%
Food clubs	43	3%
Health and wellness	83	6%

5. Do you feel mason and Ramsdell libraries should offer special programs/exhibits/collections INDEPENDENT of each other?

Answer Choices	Response Number	Response Percentage
Yes	189	81%
No	42	19%

6. Do you have a Great Barrington Library card?

Answer Choices	Response Number	Response Percentage
Yes	214	76%
No	65	24%

7. What is your age?

Answer Choices	Response Number	Response Percentage
Under 12	11	4%
12-18	11	4%
19-25	8	3%
26-35	20	7%
36-65	119	42%
65 or over	111	39%

Prefer not to answer	5	2%
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8. Where do you prefer to find out about library news and events?

Answer Choices	Response Number	Response Percentage
Social Media such as FaceBook, Instagram, X.	93	22.7%
Library website	106	26%
Newspaper online or print	59	14.4%
Email	151	37%

9. To better connect with our strategic planning, which initiatives/services do you think the libraries should focus on over the next 5 years? (Check all that apply.)

Answer Choices	Response Number	Response Percentage
Expanding digital literacy classes	83	11.5%
Increasing community gathering spaces	129	17.9%
Developing Genealogy classes and increasing	58	8%
Creating a maker space for all ages emphasizing creativity and innovation	97	13.4%
Increasing quiet study/ workspaces	83	11.5%
Creating robust programming for all ages	144	20%
Collaborating with other community organizations and other libraries for programs.	126	17.5%

Are you interested in becoming involved in the library or joining Friends of the Library?

(Please write down your contact information....name, phone number, email, volunteer interests, etc.)

Close to 30 people replied. One Spanish speaking person also volunteered from VIM.

*** Survey by Zip Code noted that for those who answered, which was 236 out of 304 surveys, Great Barrington and Housatonic comprised 78%, Berkshire and adjacent MA county was 11.1%, Out of State and Massachusetts outside of Berkshire County was 8.6%, and the rest did not answer.

*** Question 2 had 101 people answering, but only 44 from Question 1 answered “Never.” This indicate that people do have difficulties with coming to the library though they do not belong to the “Never” group, and answered the question to indicate that difficulty.

*** Age was skewed toward those of middle to older age group due to summer vacation when the survey was conducted. We are planning to reformulate another survey for school age and the young adult population to support our initiatives toward programming and acquisitions for the future.

LIBRARY SURVEY SPANISH VERSION

Encuesta comunitaria 2023 de las bibliotecas de Great Barrington

Por favor apoye a su biblioteca con la información que tanto necesita. Actualmente se está considerando un nuevo Plan Estratégico para el sistema de bibliotecas y es esencial para el crecimiento del sistema. Favor de tener en cuenta que la encuesta vence el 4 de agosto de 2023. La encuesta en papel se puede dejar en la biblioteca Mason o Ramsdell o en el Ayuntamiento. Dado que no todas las opciones se pueden enumerar en esta breve encuesta, si tiene otros comentarios o inquietudes, agréguelos al final de la encuesta.

¿Cuál es su código postal de residencia? _____

1. ¿Con qué frecuencia suele visitar la Biblioteca Mason/Ramsdell o el Sistema de Bibliotecas Virtuales de GB?

- ☐ 1. Al menos una vez por semana.
- ☐ 2. Al menos una vez al mes.
- ☐ 3. De dos o tres veces al año.
- ☐ 4. Solo visito durante el verano o vacaciones.
- ☐ 5. Nunca (Por favor complete la pregunta 2)

2. Si no usa la biblioteca, favor de decirnos por qué.

- ☐ 1. Tengo problemas para llegar.
- ☐ 2. No sé lo que se ofrece.
- ☐ 3. Satisfago mis necesidades de libros, películas, revistas, noticias por otros medios.
- ☐ 4. No hay ningún programa que me interese.
- ☐ 5. El horario de atención no se ajusta a mi horario. (Por favor, háganos saber qué horas se prefieren en la sección de comentarios al final de la encuesta).

3. Si usa la biblioteca, ¿cuál es el motivo de su visita típica? (Por favor marque todos los que apliquen.)

- ☐ 1. Libros
- ☐ 2. Material infantil

- o 3. Material juvenil
- o 4. Libros con letra grande
- o 5. Revistas
- o 6. DVD
- o 7. Audiolibros
- o 8. Puntos de acceso
- o 9. Biblioteca de las Cosas
- o 10. Pases de museo
- o 11. Un lugar tranquilo para leer/relajarse
- o 12. Asistir a programas para adultos/niños/adolescentes
- o 13. Asistir a exhibiciones de arte u otras
- o 14. Usar la computadora de la biblioteca para acceder a Internet
- o 15. Usar el Wi-Fi gratuito de la biblioteca usando su propio dispositivo
- o 16. Usar la fotocopidora o la impresora
- o 17. Tutoría/uso de una sala de reuniones
- o 18. Club de jardinería
- o 19. Club de escritura creativa
- 20. Investigación
- o 21. Voluntariado

4. Ambas bibliotecas buscan actualizar sus servicios para satisfacer las necesidades e intereses de nuestros usuarios. ¿Cuál de estos servicios le gustaría que la biblioteca creara o mejorara? (Por favor marque todos los que apliquen.)

- o 1. estudiante de inglés
- o 2. Genealogía e historia en áreas fuera de los Estados Unidos
- o 3. Proyecciones de películas que incluyen español y portugués.
- o 4. Programas musicales/conciertos presentados en español y portugués
- o 5. Ampliación de la colección de la biblioteca en español y portugués.
- o 6. Espacio de reunión de la comunidad
- o 7. Espacios reservados designados
- o 8. Espacio para trabajo colaborativo y/o espacio de encuentro
- o 9. Ampliar nuestra colección de “Biblioteca de Cosas” como máquinas de coser, música instrumentos, electrónica, etc.)
- o 10. Clases de alfabetización digital
- o 11. Mejor estacionamiento
- o 12. Clubes de lectura
- o 13. Los videojuegos, realidad virtual
- o 14. STEM (Ciencia, Tecnología, Ingeniería, Matemáticas)
- o 15. Certamen de poesía/eventos literarios

- ☐ 16. Programación robusta
- ☐ 17. Clubes de comida
- ☐ 18. Programas de salud y bienestar

5. ¿Cree que las bibliotecas de Mason y Ramsdell deberían ofrecer programas/exhibiciones/colecciones especiales INDEPENDIENTES entre sí?

- ☐ 1. Sí
- ☐ 2. No

6. ¿Tiene una tarjeta de biblioteca de Great Barrington?

- ☐ 1. Sí
- ☐ 2. No

7. ¿Cuál es tu edad?

- ☐ 1. Sub 12
- ☐ 2. 12-18
- ☐ 3. 19-25
- ☐ 4. 26-35
- ☐ 5. 36-65
- ☐ 6. 65 o más
- ☐ 7. Prefiero no contestar

8. ¿Dónde prefiere informarse sobre las noticias y eventos de la biblioteca?

- ☐ 1. Redes sociales como Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.
- ☐ 2. Sitio web de la biblioteca
- ☐ 3. Periódico en línea o impreso en papel
- ☐ 4. Correo electrónico

9. Para conectarse mejor con nuestra planificación estratégica, ¿en qué iniciativas/servicios cree que deberían centrarse las bibliotecas durante los próximos 5 años? (Marque todo lo que corresponda)

- ☐ 1. Ampliación de la colección de la biblioteca en español y portugués.
- ☐ 2. Expansión de las clases de alfabetización digital
- ☐ 3. Desarrollar clases de genealogía y aumentar los recursos en línea.
- ☐ 4. Aumentar los espacios de reunión de la comunidad
- ☐ 5. Aumentar los espacios de estudio/trabajos silenciosos
- ☐ 6. Crear una programación robusta para todas las edades
- ☐ 7. Colaborar con otras organizaciones comunitarias y otras bibliotecas para programas

¿Está interesado en involucrarse en la biblioteca o unirse a Amigos de la Biblioteca? Escriba su información de contacto... nombre, número de teléfono, correo electrónico, intereses de voluntariado, etc.

Muchas gracias por tomarse el tiempo para completar la encuesta. Su opinión es muy importante para lo que hacemos. Agregue cualquier otro pensamiento a continuación.



Summer Reading Program Celebration

Sandra Pantorno, photo